

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIE-00

INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /051 W
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O R 232337Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 709

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 3181

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: REPORT OF HIGH LEVEL COMMISSION

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 3049

1. GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE 126 OF JULY 23 CONTAINS A SUMMARY
OF THE HIGH LEVEL COMMISSION'S REPORT ON THE OLANCHO
INCIDENTS. UE MA

POINTS FOLLOW:

(A) AT 10:30 PM ON JUNE 25 ROQUE RAMON ANDRADE,
BERNARDO RIVERA IRIAS, OSCAR ORTIZ RUIZ, LINCOLN
COLEMAN, JUAN BENITO MONTOYA AND MICHAEL JEROME
CYPHER WERE TAKEN FROM THE PRISON IN JUTICALPA AND
PLACED IN A TRUCK BELONGING TO SERGEANT DAVID ARTICA
TABLADA WHICH JOINED A CONVOY COMMANDED BY MAJOR
JOSE ENRIQUE CHINCHILLA;

(B) THE CONVEY ARRIVED AT THE VALLEY OF LEPAGUARE
AT 1:30 AM WHERE THE PRISONERS WERE PLACED ABOARD
TWO OTHER VEHICLES AND TAKEN TO THE RANCH "LOS
HORCONES". JOSE MANUEL ZELAYA AND CARLOS BAHR
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ACCOMPANIED THE VEHICLES TO THE RANCH;

(C) ON THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 25 FATHER IVAN BETANCOURT#-
ACCOMPANYING RUTH ARGENTINA GARCIA MALLORQUIN AND
MARIA ELENA BOLIVAR VARGAS, ARRIVED IN THE VALLEY OF

LEPAGUARE WHERE THEY WERE CAPTURED BY 2ND LIEUTENANT BENJAMIN PLATA. LT. PLATA AND SERGEANT EUGENIO ALEMAN TOOK FATHER BETANCOURT AND THE TWO WOMEN TO "LOS HORCONES". SINCE JUNE 24 THE RANCH HAD BEEN OCCUPIED BY A PLATOON UNDER THE COMMAND OF LT. PLATA WITH THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE OWNER, JOSE MANUEL ZELAYA;

(D) AT 1:30 PM MAJOR CHINCHILLA ORDERED THREE AGENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL INVESTIGATION (DIN) TO INTERROGATE SIX OF THE PRISONERS WHO WERE THERE- AFTER KILLED WITH A 22 MAGNUM RIFLE FURNISHED BY JOSE MANUEL ZELAYA;

(E) AT THE SAME TIME FATHER BETANCOURT WAS INTERROGATED AND MADE DECLARATIONS RECORDED ON A TAPE ABOUT SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN COMPANY WITH OTHER RELIGIOUS PERSONNEL. AFTER THE INTER- YHIZATION HE WAS ALSO KILLED;

(F) SUBSEQUENTLY AND IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE WITNESSES RUTH ARGENTINA GARCIA MALLORQUIN AND MARIA ELENA BOLIVAR VARGAS WERE ASSASINATED;

(G) THE BODIES WERE LOADED ABOARD A TRUCK BELONGING TO JOSE MANUEL ZELAYA AND TAKEN TO A WELL 40 METERS DEEP. THE BODIES WERE THROWN IN THE WELL AT 4:30 AM AND LT. PLATA PUT TWO CHARGES OF DYNAMITE IN THE WELL TO CLOSE IT. THE WELL WAS THEN FILLED WITH DIRT AND THOSE INVOLVED TRIED TO ELIMINATE ALL TRACES OF THE INCIDENT. LT. PLATA IN COMPANY WITH CARLOS BAHR TOOK FATHER BETANCOURT'S CAR TO A DETOUR, COVERED IT WITH GASOLINE AND SET FIRE TO IT;

(H) THE MILITARY COMMISSION ASSIGNED DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE ACTS TO OSJOR JOSE ENRIQUE CHINCHILLA 2ND LT. BENJAMIN RODOLFO PLATA, MANUEL ZELAYA, AND CARLOS BAHR. THE COMMISSION HAS PLACED THEM UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE APPROPRIATE JUDGE TOGETHER WITH OTHERS IMPLICATED IN THE MATTER WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE ESTABLISHED BY THE COURT;
MN (I) THE MILITARY COMMISSION CARRIED OUT AN EXHAUSTIVE INVESTIGATION OF ALL FACETS OF THE INCIDENT;
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(J) THE MILITARY COMMISSION WAS ABLE TO PROVE THAT MAJOR CHINCHILLA ATTEMPTED TO BRIBE THE JOURNALIST JOSE OCHOA Y MARTINEZ WHO DID NOT ACCEPT IT. THE ATTEMPT CONSISTED OF OFFERING MONEY RECEIVED FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF LANDOWNERS AND CATTLEMEN OF OLANCHO (AGAO) IN ORDER TO DIVERT PUBLIC OPINION FROM WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN OLANCHO;

(K)H THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL ALSO HAS DOCUMENTS WHICH INDICATE THAT THE OLANCHO INCIDENTS RESULTED FROM A PLAN DIRECTED BY A GROUP BELONGING TO THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF LANDOWNERS AND CATTLEMEN OF HONDURAS (FENAGH) AND MEMBERS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN OROHSTO

CREATE JUCLIMATE OF CHAOS AND CONFRONTATION IN OLANCHO AND OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. THE DOCUMENTS MENTION FERNANDO LARDIZABAL, PRESIDENT OF FENAGH, AND BERNARDO CASANOVA, OWNER OF VARIOUS SAWMILLS IN OLANCHO;

(L) THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL EMPHASIZES THAT SUPERIOR AUTHORITIES NEVER ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO THREATEN THE LIVES OR PHYSICAL SECURITY OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN CAMPESINO ACTIVITIES EVEN THOUGH SOME OF THOSE ACTIVITIES WERE CHARACTERIZED BY SUBVERSION. THIS ISOLATED ACTION WAS CAUSED BY THE INVOLVEMENT OF FORCES OPPOSED TO CAMPESINO MOVEMENTS THAT USED THE OCCASION TO GAIN THE COMPLICITY OF MILITARY PEGMONNEL IN AUTHORITY IN OLANCHO;

(M) THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL LAMENTS THE CLIMATE OF SOCIAL AGITATION TO OPPOSING GROUPS HAVE UNLEASHED IN THE COUNTRY IN WHICH PRECIOUS LIVES HAVE BEEN LOSTL IT REITERATES TO THE HONDURAN PEOPLE THAT THE GUILTY WILL BE PUNISHED TO THE FULL EXTENT OF THE LAW AND WILL WATCH OVER THE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE JUDICIAL PROCESS; AND

(N) THE PRESENT REPORT HAS BEEN SUMMARIZED INN ORDER NOT TO CREATE OBSTACLES FOR THE JUDICIAL PROCESS OR SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATIONS.
SANCHEZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, MURDER, POLICE INVESTIGATIONS, REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TEGUCI03181
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750254-1101
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197507103/baaaaeee.tel
Line Count: 137
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 JUN 2003 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <17 MAR 2004 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 971024
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PINT, HO, PINT
To: STATE NIACT INFO GUATEMALA
MANAGUA
SAN JOSE
SAN SALVADOR
USCINCSO
Type: TE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006